MASS. ED21.2:SCH 65/4

UMASS/AMHERST
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# School Building Assistance Act

## Fact Sheet

The School Building Assistance Act is designed to help communities undertake important school building projects by having the state assume a significant portion of all costs associated with the construction of new buildings and the renovation of (or major additions to) existing buildings.

### There are 3 categories for reimbursement under the School Building Assistance Act.

| *Category 1* | *Category 2* | *Category 3* |
|---|---|---|
| Districts that are seeking reimbursement to correct a racial imbalance in a school or schools fall under this category. Money appropriated for category 1 may be used only for category 1 and may not be used for categories 2 and 3. Reimbursement to school districts under category 1 is guaranteed at 90% of total project costs. | Districts that are seeking reimbursement to add on to an existing building or to build a new building because they need space for students or "to provide full range of educational programs and to maintain full accreditation." | Districts that are seeking reimbursement for "other projects to meet significant facilities needs." |

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Money appropriated for categories 2 and 3 is provided to category 2 first and to category 3 only after approved projects in category 2 have all been funded.

### The Application Process:

School districts must apply under one of the above categories. There are several steps that a school district must complete before an application can be submitted. Technical assistance is available from the Department of Education's School Governance staff (currently consisting of only 2 people) throughout the process of preparing an application. Applications for each fiscal year must be submitted by June 1 of the preceding fiscal year.

Once all the applications are submitted, projects are prioritized within each category according to need. As categories 2 and 3 are funded from the same pot of money, all of the projects in category 2 are prioritized before all of the projects in category 3. A district's need is determined using a formula developed by the State Board of Education and the State Legislature. Each district submits a worksheet which is filled out entirely by the district all the way down to a final number. This number determines the priority ranking of the particular project.

The state assumes between 50 - 90% of the project costs, depending on the wealth of the community. A community's wealth is determined by statute and is also used in the formula to calculate a project's ranking on the priority list.

Once a project is approved for funding, the state pays a percentage of both the principal (the actual cost of construction) and the interest (the additional cost per year that the town must pay on the money borrowed to complete the construction) over a 5 - 20 year period. Though the interest accrued on a project over 20 years results in a greater cost to the state than a project that is paid back over five years, a 20-year loan enables the state to fund more projects in any given year because the yearly amount for a 20-year project is less.

If all of the projects are not funded in a given fiscal year, the list is frozen for the upcoming fiscal year. This means that the remaining projects in a previous fiscal year move to the top of the priority list in the next fiscal year.

## Steps leading up to filing an application for School Building Assistance:

1. **Determine the need for new space by evaluating existing school facilities and developing enrollment projections and educational program needs.**
2. **Develop a long-range plan for the school system, including educational and building needs and estimated costs.**
3. **Receive the endorsement of the School Committee for all parts of the plan.**
4. **Arrange a Building Needs Conference with Department staff to review the long-range educational and facilities plan for the school system.**
   There are specifications required for school buildings by the state such as district ownership of the land upon which they plan to build; making sure building plans are in accordance with environmental guidelines; and many others outlined in Chapter 645 of the Acts of 1948. The Department staff reviews a district's plan for the school system to determine how many school buildings should be built, renovated, razed, etc. Each building within a school district that is determined to be in need of construction is a separate project and will receive a different ranking on the priority list.
5. **Develop building specifications, bid documents and preliminary drawings which must be approved by the Department of Education.**
   The cost of the bid documents and drawings must be paid for initially by the town. The documents and drawings are reviewed by the Department staff to assure that they meet the specifications required by the regulations and as determined at the Building Needs Conference.
6. **Authorize bonding for the total cost of the project.**
   The town must have voted in favor of the project and the sale of municipal bonds authorized before an application can be submitted.
7. **Complete an application and submit it to the Department by June 1st.**

An example of a worksheet districts submit to determine their rank on the priority list:

Department of Education

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Priority Ranking Worksheet for School Building Assistance**

Date 6/1/95

School District: Gotham City
Project: Gotham City High School
Grades to be served: 9-12 Grant Rate 84 %
Enrollment of grades to be served: 5402

| | School Name | Gross Square Feet | Educational Square Feet |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Central H.S. | 268,853 | 179,255 |
| 2. | Peripheral H.S. | 209,745 | 118,765 |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| | etc | | |
| Totals | | 478,598 Sq. Ft. | 298,020 Sq Ft. |

**Formula:**

1) 298,020 (Educational Square Feet) / 5402 (Enrollment) = 55.2 (Educational Sq. Ft. space per pupil)

2) 110 (State Recommended Square Feet per pupil) / 55.2 (Square Feet per pupil from line 1) = 1.993 Sq. Ft

3) 1.993 Result of line 2 x 84 Grant Rate (%) = 1.674 Sq. Ft.
1.993 Sq Ft + 1.674 Sq. Ft. = 3.667 Rank

*The Grant Rate is the community's wealth as determined by the Legislature.*

*If the project is on an existing school, it is included in this list.*

*Excludes closets, bathrooms, basements and other non-educational space according to the regulations.*

*The "state recommended square footage per pupil" has been determined based on the gross square footage in the School Building Assistance regulations and the average building efficiency for schoolhouses and is as follows:*

| | |
|---|---|
| *Elementary* | *80 sq. ft./pupil* |
| *Middle/Jr. High* | *95 sq. ft./pupil* |
| *Secondary* | *110 sq. ft./pupil* |
| *Vocational* | *155 sq. ft./pupil* |

*A district that is on accreditation probation receives an extra point and a district that has received an accreditation warning receives an extra .5 points.*

*higher number = higher priority*

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| FY 1997 School Building Assistance Priority List | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| For Capital School Construction Projects | | | |
| **I. Category 1** | | | |
| **Rank** | **Project Identification** | **Individual Authorization** | **Cumulative Authorization** |
| 1/95 | Somerville Healey | $942,065 | $942,065.00 |
| 2/95 | Lynn Vocational Tech | $1,325,970 | $2,268,035.00 |
| 3/95 | Cambridge Fitzgerald | $1,631,795 | $3,899,830.00 |
| 4/95 | Cambridge Morse | $1,068,543 | $4,968,373.00 |
| **5/96** | Malden Roosevelt | $2,271,767 | $7,240,140.00 |
| 6/96 | Fall River John J. Doran Elementary | $715,500 | $7,955,640.00 |
| 7/96 | Boston Blue Hill Ave ELC | $544,448 | $8,500,088.00 |
| 8/96 | Boston Tileston ELC | $548,972 | $9,049,060.00 |
| 9/96 | Boston McKay ELC | $528,358 | $9,577,418.00 |
| 10/96 | Malden Beebe | $1,334,790 | $10,912,208.00 |
| **II. Categories 2 & 3** | | | |
| **Rank** | **Project Identification** | **Individual Authorization** | **Cumulative Authorization** |
| 1/95 | Agawam Clark | $162,718 | $162,718.00 |
| 2/95 | Agawam Granger | $167,775 | $330,493.00 |
| 3/95 | Mohawk Colrain | $212,302 | $542,795.00 |
| 4/95 | Boxborough Elementary | $374,472 | $917,267.00 |
| 5/95 | Agawam Robinson | $138,644 | $1,055,911.00 |
| 6/95 | Sudbury Nixon | $445,310 | $1,501,221.00 |
| 7/95 | Natick Brown | $317,420 | $1,818,641.00 |
| 8/95 | Chelmsford Center | $518,670 | $2,337,311.00 |
| 9/95 | Rehoboth Elementary | $406,710 | $2,744,021.00 |
| 10/95 | Mohawk High School | $792,936 | $3,536,957.00 |
| 11/95 | Easton Elementary | $1,245,934 | $4,782,891.00 |
| 12/95 | West Springfield Middle | $1,019,547 | $5,802,438.00 |
| 13/95 | Berlin Elementary | $269,514 | $6,071,952.00 |
| 14/95 | Westborough Fales | $73,360 | $6,145,312.00 |
| 15/95 | Amesbury Middle | $1,416,754 | $7,562,066.00 |
| 16/95 | Natick Lilja | $398,678 | $7,960,744.00 |
| 17/95 | Farmington River Elementary | $270,823 | $8,231,567.00 |
| 18/95 | Pioneer Valley (Bernardston) Elementary | $168,648 | $8,400,215.00 |
| 19/95 | Nashoba (Bolton) Elementary | $602,467 | $9,002,682.00 |
| 20/95 | Westborough Armstrong | $301,515 | $9,304,197.00 |
| 21/95 | Quincy Beechwood | $151,155 | $9,455,352.00 |
| 22/95 | Watertown Lowell | $402,960 | $9,858,312.00 |
| 23/95 | Mohawk Buckland | $202,820 | $10,061,132.00 |
| 24/95 | Mansfield Elementary | $393,756 | $10,454,888.00 |
| 25/95 | Watertown Middle | $412,348 | $10,867,236.00 |
| 26/95 | Danvers Riverside | $341,038 | $11,208,274.00 |
| 27/95 | Amherst-Pelham High School | $1,245,188 | $12,453,462.00 |
| 28/95 | Arlington Brackett | $438,710 | $12,892,172.00 |
| 29/95 | Westford Elementary | $306,930 | $13,199,102.00 |
| 30/95 | Agawam High School | $433,110 | $13,632,212.00 |
| 31/95 | Mansfield Middle | $552,221 | $14,184,433.00 |
| 32/95 | Tantasqua Regional High School | $2,158,248 | $16,342,681.00 |
| 33/95 | Middleton Elementary | $296,813 | $16,639,494.00 |
| 34/95 | Central Berkshire Kittredge | $275,808 | $16,915,302.00 |
| 35/95 | Burlington Elementary | $262,090 | $17,177,392.00 |

| Rank | Project Identification | Individual Authorization | Cumulative Authorization |
|---|---|---|---|
| 36/95 | North Andover Middle | $1,088,659 | $18,266,051.00 |
| 37/95 | Ashland High School | $362,192 | $18,628,243.00 |
| 38/95 | Georgetown Elementary | $306,066 | $18,934,309.00 |
| 39/95 | Brewster Elementary | $466,477 | $19,400,786.00 |
| 40/95 | Danvers Oak | $262,377 | $19,663,163.00 |
| 41/95 | Reading Middle | $779,735 | $20,442,898.00 |
| 42/95 | Watertown Cunniff | $238,397 | $20,681,295.00 |
| 43/95 | Stoughton Jr. High | $251,746 | $20,933,041.00 |
| 44/95 | Carver Jr./Sr. High School | $236,063 | $21,169,104.00 |
| 45/95 | Westborough Middle | $317,570 | $21,486,674.00 |
| 46/95 | Arlington Bishop | $235,916 | $21,722,590.00 |
| 47/95 | Arlington Hardy | $231,683 | $21,954,273.00 |
| 48/95 | Ashland Elementary | $229,272 | $22,183,545.00 |
| 49/95 | Gardner Middle | $976,600 | $23,160,145.00 |
| 50/95 | Nauset Regional High School | $485,932 | $23,646,077.00 |
| 51/95 | Mansfield High School | $448,293 | $24,094,370.00 |
| 52/95 | Newton South High School | $546,347 | $24,640,717.00 |
| 53/95 | Mendon-Upton Elementary | $275,168 | $24,915,885.00 |
| 54/95 | Ashland Middle | $144,724 | $25,060,609.00 |
| 55/95 | Hingham Middle | $268,156 | $25,328,765.00 |
| 56/95 | Georgetown Middle/High School | $925,434 | $26,254,199.00 |
| 57/95 | Brookline Heath | $286,161 | $26,540,360.00 |
| 58/95 | Quincy Parker | $110,729 | $26,651,089.00 |
| **59/96** | Fitchburg High School | $2,477,600 | $29,128,689.00 |
| 60/96 | Norton Middle | $1,482,486 | $30,611,175.00 |
| 61/96 | Rutland Middle | $759,799 | $31,370,974.00 |
| 62/96 | Charlton Middle | $1,375,055 | $32,746,029.00 |
| 63/96 | Ware High School | $1,170,525 | $33,916,554.00 |
| 64/96 | Dudley Middle | $912,935 | $34,829,489.00 |
| 65/96 | Clinton High School | $904,561 | $35,734,050.00 |
| 66/96 | Warwick Elementary | $103,053 | $35,837,103.00 |
| 67/96 | Chestfield-Goshen Elementary | $281,524 | $36,118,627.00 |
| 68/96 | Central Berkshire Nessacus Middle | $886,984 | $37,005,611.00 |
| 69/96 | Salisbury Elementary | $823,383 | $37,828,994.00 |
| 70/96 | Southborough Middle | $661,256 | $38,490,250.00 |
| 71/96 | Uxbridge Taft | $410,293 | $38,900,543.00 |
| 72/96 | Cohasset Elementary | $503,700 | $39,404,243.00 |
| 73/96 | Uxbridge Whitin Middle | $560,408 | $39,964,651.00 |
| 74/96 | Hamilton-Wenham Middle-High School | $1,270,245 | $41,234,896.00 |
| 75/96 | Taunton Elementary | $837,885 | $42,072,781.00 |
| 76/96 | Beverly New Elementary | $327,506 | $42,400,287.00 |
| 77/96 | Seekonk Middle | $543,744 | $42,944,031.00 |
| 78/96 | Haverhill Nettle | $939,468 | $43,883,499.00 |
| 79/96 | Taunton Middle | $1,675,770 | $45,559,269.00 |
| 80/96 | Wrentham Elementary | $271,843 | $45,831,112.00 |
| 81/96 | Dudley Intermediate | $260,319 | $46,091,431.00 |
| 82/96 | Paxton Elementary | $275,939 | $46,367,370.00 |
| 83/96 | Rutland Elementary | $222,495 | $46,589,865.00 |
| 84/96 | Beverly Ayers Elementary | $331,570 | $46,921,435.00 |
| 85/96 | Falmouth Lawrence Middle | $441,394 | $47,362,829.00 |

| Rank | Project Identification | Individual Authorization | Cumulative Authorization |
|---|---|---|---|
| 86/96 | Hopkinton Elementary | $622,774 | $47,985,603.00 |
| 87/96 | Quincy New Elementary | $517,388 | $48,502,991.00 |
| 88/96 | Pittsfield Reid Middle | $577,368 | $49,080,359.00 |
| 89/96 | Falmouth Morse Pond | $392,414 | $49,472,773.00 |
| 90/96 | Barnstable High School | $2,387,572 | $51,860,345.00 |
| 91/96 | Uxbridge High School | $304,116 | $52,164,461.00 |
| 92/96 | Beverly Hannah Elementary | $306,307 | $52,470,768.00 |
| 93/96 | Seekonk Elementary | $344,751 | $52,815,519.00 |
| 94/96 | Boylston Elementary | $347,986 | $53,163,505.00 |
| 95/96 | Dudley Mason Road | $230,129 | $53,393,634.00 |
| 96/96 | Beverly Cove Elementary | $363,610 | $53,757,244.00 |
| 97/96 | Marlborough Middle | $1,173,660 | $54,930,904.00 |
| 98/96 | Narragansett Middle-High School | $1,326,617 | $56,257,521.00 |
| 99/96 | Boxford Spofford Pond Elementary | $149,815 | $56,407,336.00 |
| 100/96 | Pittsfield Herberg Middle | $535,717 | $56,943,053.00 |
| 101/96 | Pittsfield Egremont Elementary | $406,260 | $57,349,313.00 |
| 102/96 | Southborough Elementary | $326,225 | $57,675,538.00 |
| 103/96 | Greenfield Middle | $781,337 | $58,456,875.00 |
| 104/96 | Barnstable Middle | $715,114 | $59,171,989.00 |
| 105/96 | Beverly North Elementary | $317,813 | $59,489,802.00 |
| 106/96 | Pittsfield Allendale Elementary | $263,472 | $59,753,274.00 |
| 107/96 | Quaboag Junior-Senior High School | $1,269,958 | $61,023,232.00 |
| 108/96 | Pittsfield Highland Elementary | $247,008 | $61,270,240.00 |
| 109/96 | Boxford Cole Elementary | $100,309 | $61,370,549.00 |
| 110/96 | Pittsfield Williams Elementary | $354,172 | $61,724,721.00 |
| 111/96 | Beverly Centerville Elementary | $300,969 | $62,025,690.00 |
| 112/96 | Pittsfield Stearns Elementary | $257,983 | $62,283,673.00 |
| 113/96 | Nashoba-Stow Hale Middle | $346,495 | $62,630,168.00 |
| 114/96 | Newton Day Middle | $213,896 | $62,844,064.00 |
| 115/96 | Newton Brown Middle | $215,147 | $63,059,211.00 |
| 116/96 | Newton Oak Hill Middle | $795,006 | $63,854,217.00 |
| 117/96 | Chatham Middle | $697,714 | $64,551,931.00 |
| 118/96 | Brookline High School | $2,214,516 | $66,766,447.00 |
| 119/96 | Carlisle Elementary | $137,807 | $66,904,254.00 |
| 120/96 | Chatham Elementary | $339,878 | $67,244,132.00 |
| 121/96 | Weston High School | $625,135 | $67,869,267.00 |
| 122/96 | Clinton Middle | $156,658 | $68,025,925.00 |

**11/18/96**